



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney  
District of the Virgin Islands*

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*Federal Building & United States Courthouse*

*5500 Veterans Drive, Suite 260  
Charlotte Amalie  
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802-6424  
Voice: (340) 774-5757  
Fax: (340) 776-3474*

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**UNITED STATES ATTORNEY ANTHONY JENKINS  
AND LUIS S. FRATICELLI, SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE,  
U.S. FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION,  
ADDRESS CONCERNS REGARDING HATE CRIMES**

United States Attorney Anthony J. Jenkins and Luis S. Fraticelli, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, today addressed public concerns about an alleged hate crime in St. John.

The Federal officials stated that they were taking very seriously the report of an alleged hate crime on St. John. The complaint has been reported to the F.B.I. for further investigation.

United States Attorney Jenkins noted that federal laws provide latitude for the prosecution of such crimes perpetrated by private citizens which are motivated by prejudice and an intent to violate a person's constitutional rights. The federal criminal civil rights statutes provide for prosecution of conspiracy to interfere with federally protected rights (18 U.S.C. § 241); the use of force or threat of force to injure or intimidate someone in the enjoyment of certain specific rights (such as voting, employment, education, use of public

facilities) (18 U.S.C. § 245); and criminal housing interference (42 U.S.C. § 3631). In addition, the Church Arson Protection Act of 1996 (18 U.S.C. § 247) amended the criminal civil rights statutes to facilitate prosecutions of racially motivated arsons and other acts of desecration against houses of worship. These statutes in general carry a penalty of ten years imprisonment and in certain circumstances, the penalties are substantially higher. There may also be local criminal statutes that can be used for the prosecution of individuals who commit hate crimes.

Attorney Jenkins emphasized that the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation consider crimes motivated by hatred of an individual's race, religion, gender and national origin to be crimes that attack the very fabric of a free multi-racial and multi-cultural society. For that reason, Federal Law Enforcement looks seriously upon the commission of such offenses, and will use every legal avenue available to bring perpetrators of hate crimes before the bar of justice. In accordance with that policy, the U.S. Attorney's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation vigorously pursue any credible allegation of a violation of civil rights, including hate crimes.

U.S. Attorney Jenkins and SAC Fraticelli further stated that they want to reassure the people of the territory that any investigation is carried out in accordance with federal law. If an investigation establishes facts sufficient to charge any person regardless of race with a violation of the federal and/or local statutes, the individual will be prosecuted vigorously in accordance with the policy of the U.S. Attorney's Office.